

IN THE SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1368

BY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION; PROVIDING LEGISLATIVE INTENT; AMENDING TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW CHAPTER 57, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR AN ONLINE TEACHING ENDORSEMENT, TO PROVIDE FOR RULES AND TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS; AMENDING SECTION 33-1619, IDAHO CODE, TO REDESIGNATE THE SECTION; AND PROVIDING EFFECTIVE DATES.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. As the mode and method of public school teaching increasingly contains an online or virtual component of instruction, the Legislature acknowledges the need to ensure that those who provide such online or virtual instruction are proficient in the use of online and virtual teaching methods. Consequently, it is the intent of the Legislature to require a teaching endorsement for "online" teaching by teachers and others providing instruction in an online or virtual format to students in Idaho public schools and public charter schools.

SECTION 2. That Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a NEW CHAPTER, to be known and designated as Chapter 57, Title 33, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

CHAPTER 57

IDAHO ONLINE AND VIRTUAL EDUCATION

33-5701. ONLINE TEACHER ENDORSEMENT -- RULES.

(1) (a) Every person who is employed as a teacher by any Idaho publicly funded elementary or secondary school and who holds a certificate issued pursuant to section 33-1201, Idaho Code, and who provides instruction in an online or virtual format shall be granted an endorsement for online instruction, provided that such person meets or exceeds the standards for such endorsement; and

(b) Every person, employed by a third party, who provides instruction in any Idaho publicly funded elementary or secondary school in an online or virtual format or who is otherwise in online or virtual contact with students in such school, shall be granted an endorsement for online instruction, provided that such person meets or exceeds the standards for such endorsement.

(2) The state board of education shall promulgate rules to provide for an endorsement for online instruction. Such rules shall provide for, among other things, standards that successful candidates for the endorsement shall meet or exceed relating to online instruction. Such rule shall also provide for a temporary endorsement for teachers who have taught online courses while having been certified by the state where such online

1 teaching experience was obtained. Such online teaching experience need not
2 necessarily have been obtained in this state.

3 33-5702. DEFINITIONS. For the purposes of this chapter, the following
4 terms have the following meanings:

5 (1) "Blended program" means instruction that is a combination of online
6 or virtual instruction and traditional face-to-face instruction.

7 (2) "Online or virtual education coursework" shall meet the criteria as
8 provided for in section 33-5205(6) (a through h), Idaho Code.

9 (3) "Online or virtual instruction" means a course taught at a distance
10 by an online teacher who is separate from students by distance and/or time.
11 Online or virtual instruction shall meet the criteria as provided for in
12 section 33-5205(6) (a through h), Idaho Code.

13 (4) "Online teacher" means a person who holds a teaching credential
14 as provided for in sections 33-1201 and 33-1207, Idaho Code, and who has
15 an endorsement in online education, and who is separated from students by
16 distance and/or time.

17 (5) "Traditional face-to-face" means a course taught by a person who
18 holds a certificate pursuant to sections 33-1201 and 33-1207, Idaho Code,
19 and where the students and teachers are not separated by distance or time.

20 (6) "Virtual education programs" shall meet the criteria provided for
21 in section 33-5205(6) (a through h), Idaho Code.

22 SECTION 3. That Section 33-1619, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby
23 amended to read as follows:

24 ~~33-1619~~33-5703. VIRTUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS. School districts may
25 offer instruction in the manner described for a virtual school in section
26 33-5202A, Idaho Code. For programs meeting such definition, the school
27 district may count and report the average daily attendance of the program's
28 students in the manner prescribed in section 33-5208(8) (b), Idaho Code.
29 School districts may also offer instruction that is a blend of virtual and
30 traditional instruction. For such blended programs, the school district may
31 count and report the average daily attendance of the program's students in
32 the manner prescribed in section 33-5208(8) (b), Idaho Code. Alternatively,
33 the school district may count and report the average daily attendance of the
34 blended program's students in the same manner as provided for traditional
35 programs of instruction, for the days or portions of days in which such
36 students attend a physical public school. For the balance of days or
37 portions of days, average daily attendance may be counted in the manner
38 prescribed in section 33-5208(8) (b), Idaho Code.

39 SECTION 4. Sections 1 and 3 of this act shall be in full force and effect
40 on and after July 1, 2010. Section 2 of this act shall be in full force and
41 effect on and after July 1, 2015.